



I. INTRODUCTION

A. ROLE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE HOUSING ELEMENT

State law recognizes the vital role local governments play in the availability, adequacy and affordability of housing. Every jurisdiction in California is required to adopt a long-range General Plan to guide its physical development; the Housing Element is one of the seven mandated elements of the General Plan. Housing Element law mandates that local governments adequately plan to meet the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community. The law recognizes that in order for the private market to adequately address housing needs and demand, local governments must adopt land use plans and regulatory systems that provide opportunities for, and do not unduly constrain housing production. Housing element statutes also require the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to review local housing elements for compliance with State law and to report their findings to the local government.

California's Housing Element law requires that each city and county develop local housing programs to meet its "fair share" of existing and future housing needs for all income groups. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is responsible for developing and assigning these regional needs, or "RHNA", to southern California jurisdictions. Pursuant to the RHNA planning period, the Huntington Beach Housing Element is a seven-year plan extending from 2008-2014.

Huntington Beach's Housing Element identifies strategies and programs that focus on:

- 1) Preserving and improving housing and neighborhoods;
- 2) Providing adequate housing sites;
- 3) Assisting in the provision of affordable housing;
- 4) Removing governmental and other constraints to housing investment; and
- 5) Promoting fair and equal housing opportunities.

The City's Housing Element consists of the following major components:

- An analysis of the City's demographic, household and housing characteristics and related housing needs (Section II);
- A review of potential market, governmental, and infrastructure constraints to meeting Huntington Beach's identified housing needs (Section III);
- An evaluation of residential sites, financial and administrative resources available to address the City's housing goals (Section IV);
- The Housing Plan for addressing the City's identified housing needs, constraints and resources; including housing goals, policies and programs (Section V).

B. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

In preparing the Housing Element, various sources of information are consulted. The 2000 Census provides the basis for population and household characteristics. Although dated, the Census remains the most comprehensive and widely accepted source of information on demographic characteristics, and provides consistency with other regional, State and federal housing plans. Several data sources are used to supplement and provide reliable updates of the 2000 Census, including:

- Population and housing count data is updated by the State Department of Finance;
- SCAG's 2003-2035 Regional Integrated Forecast provides population, housing and employment projections;
- Household income data by type of household (e.g. seniors, large families, etc) is derived from the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) prepared by HUD;
- Housing market information, such as home sales and rents, is updated through newspaper and internet rent surveys, DataQuick sales transactions, and regional market data reports;
- A variety of household needs information is derived from the City's Consolidated Plan;
- Housing conditions information is obtained from recent field surveys conducted by the Huntington Beach Planning Department;
- SCAG's 2008-2014 Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) provides information on existing and projected housing needs;
- Lending patterns for home purchase and home improvement loans are provided through the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) database;
- Information on Huntington Beach's development standards are derived from the City's Zoning Ordinance; and
- Information on planned expenditures of City/Agency Housing Funds are derived from the Redevelopment Agency's 2007 Housing Strategy.

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Section 6553(c)(6)(B) of the Government Code states that, "The local government shall make diligent effort to achieve public participation of all economic segments of the community in the development of the housing element, and the program shall describe this effort." Opportunities for community stakeholders to provide input on housing issues and recommend strategies are critical to the development of appropriate and effective programs to address the City's housing needs. Huntington Beach solicits input from the public throughout the year-long housing element process: during development of the draft element; during public review of the draft element; and during the adoption process.

The City solicited public input early during development of the draft element through a series of three public meetings. Notification of these meetings was provided in the local newspaper, and direct notification was provided to over 50 interested groups and individuals. Groups notified included: for-profit and non-profit developers active in the City; advocacy groups representing lower income populations; business organizations; realtors; adjacent jurisdictions; and individuals requesting notification. A copy of the meeting notification and distribution list is included in the Appendix. Public meetings were conducted in a workshop setting in a City Hall conference room before the following bodies:

- Planning Commission
- Ad Hoc Council Committee on Affordable Housing
- City Council

Summary comments from the workshops are included in Appendix D to the Element. Some of the common themes that arose out of the community meetings include:

- Declining numbers of families highlight the needs for affordable housing
- City's single-family housing stock is aging, corresponding to an increased need for housing rehabilitation assistance
- Support program for rehabilitation of rental housing in deteriorated neighborhoods with associated affordability covenants
- Preservation of assisted rental housing at-risk of conversion is high priority, as well as preservation of existing mobile home parks
- Need to address multiple families living in one unit - household overcrowding
- Growth of senior population necessitates focus on senior housing needs
- Opportunities for mixed use extend beyond Beach/Edinger Specific Plan area to other arterials. City should adopt a citywide mixed use ordinance.
- Significant potential for conversion of older shopping centers to mixed use.
- Child care needs are linked with housing. City should adopt childcare policy in Housing Element.

Each of these issues is addressed within the Housing Element's policies and programs.

Upon completion of the draft Housing Element, the City circulates a Notice of Availability to a variety of interested organizations. The Notice defines a 60 day review and comment period, and identifies locations for review of the draft document, including the local libraries, the Senior Centers, City Hall, and the Planning Department. In addition, the draft Housing Element is placed on the city's website at www.ci.huntington-beach.ca.us. The draft is also sent to the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for review and comment.

Public hearings are held on the Housing Element before both the Planning Commission and City Council. Notification is published in the local newspaper in advance of each hearing, and direct notices are mailed to interested groups and individuals. Public hearings are televised, allowing greater access to individuals unable to attend in person.

D. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS

The 1996 Huntington Beach General Plan is comprised of the following sixteen elements/resource topics:

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| ➤ Land Use | ➤ Recreation and Community Services |
| ➤ Urban Design | ➤ Historical and Cultural Resources |
| ➤ Housing | ➤ Environmental Resources/Conservation |
| ➤ Economic Development | ➤ Noise |
| ➤ Growth Management | ➤ Environmental Hazards |
| ➤ Circulation | ➤ Air Quality |
| ➤ Utilities | ➤ Hazardous Materials |
| ➤ Public Facilities and Services | ➤ Coastal |

There is a high degree of interrelationship among the various elements of the Huntington Beach General Plan. For example, the Land Use Element provides for the types, density/intensity, design, and distribution of residential land uses, whereas the Housing Element addresses the manner in which existing housing will be conserved and new housing will be provided where the Land Use Element permits development.

The City will ensure consistency between the Housing Element and the other General Plan elements so that policies introduced in one element are consistent with other elements. Whenever any element of the General Plan is amended in the future, the Housing Element will be reviewed and modified, if necessary, to ensure continued consistency between elements.